

Remarks Following a Visit With Wounded Troops at Walter Reed Army Medical Center

December 22, 2006

Laura and I are honored to be here to thank the folks working here at this service project. What you're seeing is some young kids wrapping gifts for children whose families are here in Washington, DC, as a result of an injury that they've received—that their parent received in combat.

We've also just come from Walter Reed. I got to tell you, it's a remarkable experience to go through the hospital. It's remarkable because of the unbelievable compassion and care of the people who work at Walter Reed. And it's also remarkable to me, these men and women who have volunteered to serve our country, who've received terrible wounds, but whose spirits are strong; their resolve is strong; and their dedication to our country remains strong.

I want all our fellow citizens to understand that we're lucky to have men and women who have volunteered to serve our

country like those who wear our uniform. We're lucky to have their families support them so strongly. We owe them all we can give them, not only for when they're in harm's way, but when they come home, to help them adjust if they have wounds or help them adjust after their time in service. We owe a huge debt of gratitude for incredible men and women. And I—every time I come to Walter Reed, I am moved by the courage and bravery of the people I meet.

And so on behalf of a grateful nation, I want to thank our military families, thank the folks here who are wrapping gifts for the military families, and ask for God's blessings on our citizens.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:01 p.m.

The President's Radio Address

December 23, 2006

Good morning. As families across our Nation gather to celebrate Christmas, Laura and I send our best wishes for the holidays. We hope that your Christmas will be blessed with family and fellowship.

At this special time of year, we give thanks for Christ's message of love and hope. Christmas reminds us that we have a duty to others, and we see that sense of duty fulfilled in the men and women who wear our Nation's uniform. America is blessed to have fine citizens who volunteer to defend us in distant lands. For many of them, this Christmas will be spent far from home, and on Christmas our Na-

tion honors their sacrifice and thanks them for all they do to defend our freedom.

At Christmas, we also recognize the sacrifice of our Nation's military families. Staying behind when a family member goes to war is a heavy burden, and it is particularly hard during the holidays. To all our military families listening today, Laura and I thank you, and we ask the Almighty to bestow His protection and care on your loved ones as they protect our Nation.

This Christmas season comes at a time of change here in our Nation's Capital, with a new Congress set to arrive, a review of our Iraq strategy underway, and a new Secretary of Defense taking office. If you're